

### Open Air Events

An amplifier device includes loud-hailers, megaphones, public address systems (other than for a railway), remote telephone bells and telephone repeater bells. Noise from amplifier devices can disturb neighbours, disrupt their sleep and interfere with their normal daily activities (listening to the TV, talking on the telephone). This is called having an impact on an environmental value and is defined in the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* as; “a quality of physical characteristic of the environment that is conducive to ecological health of public amenity or safety; or another quality of the environment identified and declared to be an environmental value under an environmental protection policy or regulation.” If these types of environmental nuisances occurs loud enough, it can impact on people’s health

Note: For different areas of responsibilities of reporting, please read the “Environmental Noise” fact sheet.

#### **Be a Good Neighbour**

Take the time to talk to neighbours. Find out what concerns they may have and ask them for suggestions about solving any problems. Discuss noise concerns with neighbours before installing equipment that emits noise. In many cases an agreement can be reached that satisfy the needs of everyone.

#### **The Law**

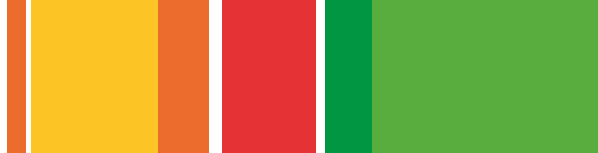
The *Environmental Protection Act 1994* introduced by the State Government include noise limits for amplifier devices. Council is legally required to enforce these limits when the noise is emitted from residential premises. If issues between neighbours cannot be resolved and further complaints are made, Council will have to investigate. If an amplifier device exceeds noise limits, Council may issue the person who owns or operates the device with an on-the-spot fine.

#### **Allowable Noise Limits**

If audible noise from an amplifier device can be heard at a neighbour’s house during the following hours, the owner or operator of the device may be issued with an on-the-spot fine:

- on a business day, before 7a.m. or after 10p.m.; or
- on any other day, before 8a.m. or after 6p.m.

At a time when the person may operate the device, the person must not operate the device in a way that makes noise of more than 10dB(A) above the background level. The only exception is operating the device at an educational institution.



### Ways to reduce noise

A range of measures can be used to reduce the noise impact of an amplifier device. These include:

- a) Limiting hours  
Talk to neighbours to find out if there are particular times when the noise disturbs them. Most people are often concerned about operation at night or early morning when they are trying to sleep.
- b) Selecting a Quieter alternative  
Alternatives may be available that are quieter and do not disturb neighbours. For example, telephone repeater bells can be replaced with visual alarms (e.g. flashing lights) or a personal pager which alerts the receiver of a call.
- c) Location  
Locating amplifier devices as far as possible from neighbours and away from sensitive areas (e.g. bedroom windows) may reduce their impact.
- d) Fences or Barriers  
A solid fence may help to reduce noise levels. This won't be as effective if the fence has gaps.

### Below is a practical guide to different decibel levels:

- Quiet room in the house 20-30 dB(A)
- Daytime in a quiet residential street 35-45 dB(A)
- Large busy office 50-60 dB(A)
- Lawn mower from 15 meters away 70 dB(A)

**For further information please contact:**

**Environmental Health Services at Mount Isa City Council on 4747 3200**

